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# Guide

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## **A FRESH ORIENTATION IN THE CHURCH**

Robert Rouquette, S.J.

## **COMMON GROUND BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS**

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IT SEEMS TO ME

## Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton

On the third Sunday of Lent 1963, the American convert Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton was beatified. Thus for the first time, the Catholic Church in the United States offered one of its very own to the world as an officially recognized "flower of sanctity."

Pope John, in his address on the occasion of her beatification, paid many significant compliments to her, to her spiritual daughters and also to the nation she dearly loved. He noted that through her who was "an authentic daughter of that nation" and one who embraced the ageless, universal principles of Christian spirituality, "to the very concepts of the Church's holiness a new note has been added."

Those who are dedicated to the holy work of Ecumenism and those who apply themselves to the direct apostolate of winning converts will be especially pleased with Pope John's explicit reference to a principle which goes to the very core of each of these activities. Anyone who cherishes anything that is true or good is not asked to abandon these precious elements in his life by the Catholic Church. It is our conviction that he must continue to treasure these gifts of God—be they many or few, and that he will find in the Church their rich completion and fulfillment.

"As can be said of other outstanding persons of the 19th century," the Pope declared, "the newly beatified arrived at Catholicism, not by a denial of the past but rather as reaching a providential goal through study, prayer and the practice of charity, for which she had been prepared by the whole course of her former life.

"One step after another, she found herself in the bosom of the Catholic Church. This was for her an enriching of the treasure she already possessed, an opening of the jewel box she held in her hands, a penetration into the complete truth, to which she had been close since the years of her youth."

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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# A Fresh Orientation in the Church

Robert Rouquette, S.J.

I admit that I arrived in Rome in early October with pessimistic feelings about what the Council would achieve. After a two-month session, I felt completely thrilled to have taken part in a great historical event: a decisive turning-point in the history of the Church. Undoubtedly, my opinion will amaze some of my journalistic colleagues, not to mention many Council Fathers. . . .

It would be a serious mistake to conclude that the first session was entirely negative in its achievement. Although the tangible results might seem somewhat negative, the total results have major importance; they indicate a fresh orientation in the Church with tremendous consequences.

On Tuesday, November 20, at the end of the 23rd daily session, the future of the Council was endangered when a vote of the fathers was held and a large majority declined to undertake a detailed discussion of the dogmatic schema on the sources of Revelation; this took place after a week of debate (November 14 to 20) on the schema's general principles.

The schema on the sources of Revelation, the first in the series of dogmatic schemas, had been prepared by the Theological Commission, which is presided over by Cardinal Ottaviani and whose secretary is Father Tromp, a Dutch theologian and professor at the Gregorian University. The schema treats of the manner in which we receive the revelation God wished to impart about Himself. The schema stirred up strong opposition. The first day it was presented for discussion, some of the cardinals took a vigorous stand against it and cast their *non placet*: Cardinals Liénart (France), Frings (Germany), Léger (Canada), Alfrink (Holland), Suenens (Belgium), Ritter (U.S.A.), Bea (of the Curia) and the Patriarch Max-

imos of Alexandria. At the same time, Cardinals Ruffini (Italy), Siri (Italy) and Quiroga (Spain) were speaking in favor of the schema. . . .

On several points of extreme delicacy, the schema makes statements without any shade of qualification. The adversaries felt that this seemed to prohibit all further inquiry into such questions as the inspiration of the sacred writers, the inerrancy of Scripture in profane matters, the historicity of the gospels, the identity of the evangelists and the objectivity of the words the gospels attribute to Christ.

To be sure, no Catholic can doubt that the authors of the books of the Bible were personally inspired by the Holy Spirit nor that they were instruments in His service—instruments who moreover remain free and human. No one can, after Leo XIII's encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, reduce the inerrancy of Scripture to matters specifically religious. No one can hold the narratives of the evangelists to be legends that are the attainment of a collective conscience. No one can regard the substance of Christ's words as the invention of the sacred writers even though in St. John we are not always able to determine easily the line separating the evangelist's reflections and his narration of Christ's words. . . .

The manner in which the schema is phrased risks closing the road to the research of exegetes; this research can in no way cast doubt on their faithfulness to the Church. In Rome these past years heated campaigns have taken place which resemble the worst quarrels between the Jansenists and their adversaries. The special target

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Courtesy of *The Catholic World*, March 1963. A translation of the article Father Rouquette prepared for *Etudes* of which he is editor, which he permitted Father Sheerin to share with *The Catholic World* readers. A condensation.



of these campaigns has been the Pontifical Biblical Institute which has been directed for a long time by Cardinal Bea. But, in addition to the Biblical Institute, these campaigns seek to discredit the entire Catholic biblical movement which is so alive and which was brought to life by Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*. This biblical movement, which has won the esteem of non-Catholic scholarship, has been charged with having been unduly influenced by the methods ascribed to the *Formgeschichte*. This latter school has its extreme proponent in Bultmann, a German Protestant theologian and exegete, who practically does away with the historical aspect of the New Testament facts. It is wrong to accuse Catholic exegetes of using this approach, even to the slightest degree, but it can be easily shown that it is legitimate to use certain wholesome data of the *Formgeschichte* without casting doubt on the historicity and objectivity of the gospel narratives.

Cardinal Bea, an outstanding scholar who is beyond all suspicion and who enjoys the honor of the Holy Father's confidence, has summarized what can be safely retained of these methods. He gave this summary in a tract drawn up not for the general public but rather for the purposes of the Council Fathers. Cardinal Tisserant, also a genuine scholar, has equally defended Catholic exegesis before the Council.

The exegetes who adopt, in part, the methods of the *Formgeschichte* clearly understand that the evangelists were not stenographers who took down dictation of Christ's words or went about proclaiming the words of Christ with a megaphone. The gospels are essentially preachings, the announcement of a doctrine of salvation, but a doctrine of salvation based on historical facts; these facts are presented in an order which is not necessarily chronological, but which is determined by the needs of the preaching.

Moreover, the manner of presenting the facts and the teaching that emanates from them depends on the individual preacher's psychology and on the collective psychology of the different members of the audience. Broadly speaking, a method of inquiry is established to discern what the encyclical of Pope Pius XII calls the "literary genres" of the parts of the Old and New Testaments, literary genres ranging all the way

from the parable, poetry, paradox (a favorite of the Semite), and eschatological vision down to the chronicle, properly so-called. The degree of historicity varies evidently according to the different genres, that is to say, according to the different purposes which the sacred writers wish to bring to light. In particular, these methods help us understand that what appears to be error in profane matters in biblical writings can be explained by the idiom of the times in question. Such research demands, besides, a prodigious erudition and the knowledge of the processes of thought, as well as the sociological conditions of Semitic antiquity.

### Authenticity Guaranteed

No Catholic exegete doubts the substantial authenticity of the words of Christ in the gospel. This authenticity is guaranteed, too, by the methods of memorization employed in a culture largely oral and by the obvious intention of the evangelists who sought to give an exact account of the Lord's message. But study of the milieu and also the data of linguistic and mob psychology lead us to think that Christ's words are at times reported through the prism of the gospel preachers and in a manner adapted to the hearer. In this way one can explain the different forms in which the substantially identical words of Christ are sometimes expressed, and the minor differences that can occur in the description of the same incident. Obviously, this procedure is entirely legitimate and is completely foreign to the denials of a Bultmann, even if there are certain superficial popularizers and students who are novices in the field and guilty of indiscretions. . . .

Finally, the adversaries of the schema take exception to it because it does not conform to the ecumenical spirit which motivates Pope John XXIII. For some, the ecumenical spirit would seem to be a matter of expressing hard truths gracefully. Surely, genuine ecumenism requires an exact statement of the Catholic faith, but this is not enough. The ecumenical spirit was described in detail in an admirable speech by Bishop De Smedt of Bruges, on November 19, 1962, given in the name of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. This speech can be considered a decisive moment in this historic debate. It expressed an attitude which has gradually enlisted



the support of a majority of the Council. Undoubtedly, it is one of the Council's most important achievements. (The substance of this address has been published in the Catholic diocesan press.)

The cardinals in favor of the schema believe, first, that the faith is seriously endangered by present-day biblical research, that the faith of ordinary people is threatened because of such radical changes (this argument is worthy of attention) as is the purity of the Church's traditional beliefs. Many a Father was certainly disturbed by the attacks hurled at the biblical movement. Papers strongly endorsing this position were distributed among the members of the Council.

One should take note, however, as one aged prelate in the assembly called to our attention, that this question involves many men who studied Scripture and theology before the renewal launched by Pope Pius XII's encyclical on Scripture. To have to about-face and accept the breadth and the nuances of a new biblical movement makes them ill-at-ease. . . .

Let us measure the significance of the November 20th vote and of the decision of Pope John approving it. The great majority of all the bishops declined to take a purely defensive stand against error. They believe that there is no heresy threatening the Church. They wish to afford a salutary freedom to exegetes in their research, without suspecting, as a matter of fact, that learned men whose intention is to be faithful to the Church may be heretical. This majority wishes to use a language that men today understand, a pastoral language that can actually announce the message of the gospel. Finally, though not of least importance, these bishops wish to set up a real dialogue with non-Catholics. Their purpose is not only to maintain the integrity of the faith, but to understand non-Catholics as well. They wish to enable non-Catholics to make themselves understood and as Dr. Visser't Hooft recently requested, also to listen to them in order to give thought to their needs and their spiritual interests. The vote taken on November 20 marks the end of the era of the Counter-Reformation and inaugurates a new Christian era, filled with unforeseeable consequences. . . .

The schema on the Church was distributed among the Fathers only a few

days before they began to discuss it. It is a very long document consisting of 11 chapters of 80 quarto pages. It shares the same inspiration as the other dogmatic schemas which the bishops received previously, the first of which dealt with the sources of Revelation. And it met with the same general objections as had been raised against the Revelation schema. It came up for discussion during the week of December 1 to 7.

It was criticized for sounding like a scholastic dissertation and for lacking an ecumenical approach and scriptural basis. As in the schema on Revelation, the theology in the schema on the Church is not sharply defined. Only the concept of the Mystical Body is developed, and that for the purpose of explaining the nature of the Church. All other scriptural concepts are neglected. The essential teaching on membership in the Church, the question of the identification of the Body of Christ and the visible Catholic Church are settled in too abrupt and hasty a manner. Above all, no one has broached the question which is at the heart of the Council: what is the relation between the primacy of the pope and the mission of the college of the bishops?

## Laity's Role

The role of the laity, as it is presented, is altogether passive. The chapter on the relation of Church and State raises once again archaic and theoretical arguments which take no account of the real conditions of the present-day world. The same thing can be said about the chapter on the evangelization of non-Christians.

Of the numerous speeches let us confine ourselves to Bishop De Smedt's, which was particularly severe. He accused the schema of three faults: triumphalism, clericalism and legalism. "Triumphalism" denotes that it has been drawn up in the pompous style of *L'Osservatore Romano* and other documents which present the Church as going from triumph to triumph, and thereby winning world-wide acclaim for the statements and actions of its leaders. "Clericalism" embodies a pyramidlike concept with ineffectual laymen at the base and the pope who is everything at the top. On the contrary, the Bishop of Bruges recalled that the whole Church: laymen, priests and bishops alike make up a single people



to whom the bishops are servants. He pointed out the danger of falling into "episcopalism": the cult of bishops and of the pope. Finally, there is the charge of legalism which forgets the maternal role of the Church.

What had to be said, was said in strong terms that did not fail to shock even many bishops of the majority. The point need not be pressed further: De Smedt's speech demonstrated how unacceptable the schema was and no poll was necessary to find this out.

Nevertheless, and this is of utmost importance, one important matter emerged from the discussions of the last few days, thanks especially to Cardinal Suenens, Archbishop of Malines, who together with Cardinals Léger (Canada), Frings (Germany) Liénart and Bea, was among those who were heard with the most earnest attention. The same matter was pointed out again by Cardinal Leraco of Bologna and by Cardinal Montini who till then had remained in the background.

According to these cardinals, the Council is beset by an ocean of topics. The schemas lack coherence one with the other; they introduce theoretical matter which former councils have already treated or which need further reflection; they do not deal with the major themes that cause anguish to modern man. With remarkable feeling, Cardinal Lercaro recalled that the Church must be the Church of the poor. The Church's first mission is to evangelize the poor, and it must give even exteriorly the example of real poverty.

Cardinal Suenens therefore asked for a new formulation of the schemas, according to a plan divided into three points. The central question would be the Church and its mission. The first point should be concerned with the Church *ad intra*: that is, its nature, its mystery and its work. The second point should deal with the Church's missionary action and its relations with other Christians. Finally, the third point should look to the Church *ad extra*: that is, it must busy itself with the problems of humanity: war, hunger, the question of the value of life, today's population explosion. The Church must establish not only individual but social morality, and denounce superfluities on an individual, national and international level.

In a word, the Council must establish

a dialogue with non-Catholics, with its "brothers who are not yet visibly united to it," and with the world. Along with Bishop Helder Câmara, auxiliary of Rio de Janeiro, bishop of the hovels; Bishop Ancel, the superior of the poor priests of Prado, formerly a bishop-worker, and Archbishop Hurley of Durban in South Africa who condemned apartheid, Cardinal Suenens desires the creation of a secretariat devoted to the problems of the modern world, similar to that for Promoting Christian Unity headed by Cardinal Bea. . . .

The bishops have come to know the meaning of liberty: "These providential debates," Pope John said on December 8, "have brought out the truth and have displayed to the world the sacred liberty of God's children that exists in the Church. The debates have enabled the Church to declare that no heresy threatens and to assert that this same sacred liberty is necessary to pastoral, theological and exegetical inquiries. This great phenomenon of a collective conscience is, we repeat, an important historic event and the beginning of a new era in the history of the Church."

## Episcopal Collegiality

The honesty that must guide the historian of our day, however, obliges him to recognize that we do not yet completely enjoy the fruits of these achievements. In certain quarters of the Roman Curia there are evident signs of strong opposition against the Council; there is hot-blooded disagreement with the majority of the Council, shock at the freedom of bishops and at the rediscovery of the episcopal collegiality. I must remark, however, that Cardinal Ottaviani, whose projects received harsh treatment, evinced an attitude of peace and humor, and the spirit of faith.

Some regard this opposition as stemming from political questions. Certain Italian newspapers and weeklies with a wide circulation affect (God knows why) to see in the Council a danger of surrender in the face of communism. A review like *Borghese*, anticlerical not too long ago, has suddenly exhibited burning zeal for the purity of the faith. Even a neutral paper like the responsible *Corriere della Sera* has published a series of articles, probably inspired by some clergymen, clearly insinuating that the Pope himself is a modernist.



But when the opposition involves responsible theologians, then this opposition is the action of sincere men who reap the fruits of a thankless task. . . . They canonize their personal thought too quickly and identify themselves with the Universal Church. They are far removed from modern ideas. The role of judge which capable theologians must assume in the Roman Congregations distorts their vision and they easily play the game of calling "heretic." In all of this, they are genuinely convinced that they seek the glory of God.

With respect to the Council, these men are too liable to forget that the bishops gathered together in council are an instrument of the Holy Spirit. The Council, the Pope said on December 8, is "an act of faith in God, of obedience to His laws, and a sincere effort to respond to the plan of redemption for which the Word became flesh." The Council allows "the truth to appear." Although these men may suffer upset at the expression of a truth which is not as they expected, they have to be patient and sympathetic. One would wish, however, that the methods the opposition employs were otherwise. The petty and indirect tactics used have deeply astounded

and estranged a great number of bishops on the "periphery." The North Americans in particular have been badly impressed by a definite lack of fair play. Generally speaking, the Americans came to the Council in a reactionary spirit but they departed transformed mostly because of these tactics.

The opposition, it must be said, has to deal with a new pontificate. Yet the Pope's illness makes the future uncertain. What would another reign be like? What kind of spirit would a new pope instill into the Council? The Pope knows he is ill, more perhaps than we know. He accepts it peacefully and with a resignation to God's will, which is the outstanding characteristic of his spirituality. I can still hear the strong feelings of love trembling in his voice as he was ending his address on December 8: "We have a long journey to travel," he said to the Council Fathers, "but you know that the supreme Pastor will accompany you with love in the pastoral care of your respective diocese. We can look forward to great responsibilities, but God will be our support along the way." We ought to have the same faith in God's care of the Church.

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### WHO IS A CATHOLIC?

"That man is a Catholic who opens himself to all and allows the universal love of the Lord to resound in his heart. He is a Catholic who, when he remembers the mercy of Christ towards him, becomes merciful, that is to say, overwhelmed by distress, whatever form that distress may take. He is a Catholic who instinctively rejects everything that is a source of division, who cannot meet anyone without tirelessly seeking out an area of agreement. He is a Catholic who sees in each man not the social category to which he belongs, nor the label which is applied to him, of unbeliever or Protestant or Jew or Communist, but the brother for whom Christ died and who has been placed in his path in order to receive his love. Finally, he is a Catholic who, through humility, has made himself poor in spirit and is always ready to welcome those who are deprived, whether it be of material goods or of the light of faith."

BISHOP HUYGHE

# Common Ground Between Catholics and Protestants

Michael Hurley, S.J.

It has almost become a commonplace nowadays to speak of the modern rediscovery of the Church by Protestants, but nevertheless I should like to begin by dwelling a little on it, not indeed in any spirit of confessional complacency but rather to thank God and to take fresh confidence by noting how the Spirit received in Baptism can lead us eventually to the fullness of truth. We are all now fully agreed that the Church is of the essence of Christianity, that like the cross it cannot be made void, that it is indeed one of our chief glories as Christians. But this common recognition of what might be called "the cruciality of the Church" is quite a new development.

In the winter of 1899-1900 the famous German historian and theologian, Adolph Harnack, delivered a celebrated series of lectures at the University of Berlin published immediately under the title *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, the Essence of Christianity. For Harnack however this essence includes neither dogma nor Church. Christianity, in his view, is an inner religious experience of the Fatherhood of God, not an outward show of doctrine and law; and the great achievement of Protestantism is to have brought religion back once again to itself, to have put the Gospel and the corresponding religious experience once again into the foreground and to have freed it from all alien accretions.

In some respects, however, even Luther himself and contemporary Protestantism as well, do, it seems to Harnack, lie open to criticism. Not being in a position to examine them historically, Luther accepted the two old dogmas of the Trinity and of Christ's two natures and even framed new ones. And the modern Protestant Churches are becoming more and more "Churches of ordinance, doctrine and ceremony." Accord-

ing to the great Harnack, however, "the whole outward and visible institution of the Church claiming divine dignity has no foundation whatever in the Gospel. It is a case not of distortion but of total corruption. Religion has here strayed away in a direction that is not of its own." He is well aware, he says, that in the interest of order and instruction outward and visible communities must arise but, he adds significantly, "let anyone who has such a Church have it as though he had it not."

Unfortunately Adolf Harnack is not an isolated figure. His views seem typical not only of continental but also of much of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism in the nineteenth century. Within a year of its appearance in Germany, *Das Wesen des Christenthums* was made available to English-speaking readers under the title *What is Christianity?* By that time of course the whole Oxford movement was well underway and *Lux Mundi*, the famous volume of essays edited by Gore, had appeared in 1889. This renewal within the Church of England had led naturally to a rediscovery of the Church. *Lux Mundi* contained an essay on it which, in striking contrast to the ideas of Harnack, opened with the words: "Christianity claims to be at once a life, a truth and a worship; and, on all these accounts it needs must find expression in a church" and then went on to show the Church as "the visible organ of the risen Lord, the organ of redemption, of revelation, of worship; the chief instrument designed by the Lord for the establishment of the kingdom of heaven upon earth."

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Courtesy of *Doctrine and Life*. (Jan. 1963) a monthly publication of the Irish Dominicans, St Saviour's, Dublin 1, Ireland. \$4.00 annually. With permission of the author. This was one of a series of lectures at the Catholic Central Library, Dublin



From Gore to Temple and since, this rediscovery of the Church has gone on steadily gaining ground. Its influence on Churches of the Calvinist tradition may be seen in the significant fact that, whereas in 1927 Karl Barth entitled the first systematic exposition of his theology *Die Christliche Dogmatik* (Christian Dogmatics), in 1932 he changed the title to *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik* (Church Dogmatics). Also no doubt significant is the following statement in the report presented to His Grace of Canterbury by a group of Free Churchmen in 1950:

It should by now be sufficiently clear that belief in the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is integral to the faith of Protestantism. We believe that incorporation into the Church of Christ, the new Israel of God, is not an optional extra which can be dispensed with by those who possess a high degree of spirituality. . . .

Finally, before closing this introduction, I should like also to note that this whole movement of renewed theological interest in the Church (which had its counterpart among Catholics in a new emphasis on the doctrine of the Mystical Body) reached a climax in the following epoch-making statement of the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches:

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages, in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people. It is for such unity that we believe we must pray and work.

It is a far cry indeed from Harnack's lecture on the Essence of Christianity in Berlin in 1899-1900 to this Report on Unity of the World Council of Churches from New Delhi in 1961 and its emphatic acknowledgment that the Council's goal of Christian unity is a true visible Church unity of faith, worship and government. Ecumenism, it would ap-

pear, is not merely hoping against hope but moving forward with relatively rapid strides towards its distant goal.

Descending from the general to the particular, the first point of detail to be noted on which Catholics and Protestants now agree in their ecclesiology, i.e. their doctrine of the Church is: that the Church is God's will and his gift. As a result of unprejudiced biblical study we all now recognize that, so far from being, as many in the nineteenth century thought, a mere human innovation of later days unenvisaged by Christ himself, the Church in fact owes its origins in essentials to none other than the historical Jesus of Nazareth; that so far from being an institution alien to the New Testament the Church is central and essential to it. Just as the whole burden almost of the Old Testament is the fact that God, by redeeming Israel from the bondage of Egypt and establishing a covenant with them on Sinai, acquired for himself a special people with Moses and others as its rulers and his ministers; so too the whole burden of the New Testament is (we all now agree) the fact that God in Christ, by redeeming mankind from the bondage of sin and establishing the new and eternal covenant on Calvary, acquired for himself a new people, the new Israel with the apostles as its rulers and his ministers. The precise function and form of the Church's ministry is of course among other things an unsolved difference between us and there are still liberals like von Loewenich who, under the influence of Schweitzer, see "an element of truth" in the extreme eschatological view that Jesus considered the end of the world and the coming of the Kingdom as imminent and could not therefore have possibly intended to found a Church. But the majority of Protestants, especially in these islands, would I think wholeheartedly accept the content of the following passage in the papal encyclical on the Mystical Body:

The Divine Redeemer began to build the mystical temple of his Church when he was preaching and giving his commandments; he completed it when he hung in glory on the Cross; he manifested and promulgated it by the visible mission of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, upon his disciples.

Indeed our common recognition and acceptance of the fact that one visible Church was founded on the apostles by Christ him-



self is now the whole source and basis of the ecumenical movement. Without this acceptance Christian disunity and a plurality of Churches might be considered unsatisfactory, it could not be considered (which it increasingly is) as contrary to God's will and quite simply wrong.

## The Holy Spirit

A second point of Catholic-Protestant agreement with regard to the nature of the Church might be expressed as follows: the Church is indwelt and empowered by the Spirit of Jesus, the third person of the Blessed Trinity, and it is he who constitutes its chief source and bond of unity. This is of course the doctrine of St. Paul according to whom it is in the Spirit that the baptized receive the great Christian gifts of reconciliation, sonship and access to the Father. It is the doctrine of the *Acts of the Apostles*, the book as it has been called, of the Holy Spirit, which shows us the third person of the Trinity sent by the glorified Lord as the life and soul and indeed as the guide and ruler of the primitive Christian community and of the apostles in particular. It is the doctrine of St. John who records for us Christ's prayer that all his followers be one as he and the Father are one, "as thou Father in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us . . . that the love wherewith Thou lovest me may be in them." And Christian tradition has tended to see the Holy Spirit as the consubstantial love and bond of unity between Father and Son. So it is that faithful to this teaching of the New Testament, the ancient Creeds, which we all accept and revere in common, include in their article on the Spirit references to the Church and to the graces of the Atonement. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy, Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting." All these, it is clearly implied, are the works and gifts of the Spirit of Jesus but first and foremost among them is the Church.

This spiritual invisible aspect of the Church's being and nature as the home of the Holy Spirit and the realm of its operation figures prominently in the Assembly statements of the World Council of Churches and has always received considerable stress in Protestantism. To Catholics

this stress has often seemed unbalanced, implying a disregard for if not denial of the visible institutional aspect of the Church which they consider equally important and which therefore in reaction and opposition to Protestantism they in their turn have heavily stressed. Because of this and also, I think, because of the historical association in the papacy of political and spiritual authority, many Protestants still seem convinced that we Catholics forget or deny the invisible spiritual aspect of the Church's being, that for us Church unity is a mere human organizational juridical unity, that Church power and authority as conceived and exercised by us are not sufficiently sweetened by the ideals of Christian love and service and humility, are not, in other words, a mediation of the power and authority of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus but merely human and worldly activities prejudicial to the Lordship of Christ, head of the Body.

## Historical Burdens

During the last hundred years, however, the papacy has providentially been relieved of the embarrassing burden of political power and the theologians have been laboring hard to rescue our theology of the Church from the no less embarrassing effects of post-Tridentine controversy. Their work was approved and blessed in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* of 1943 and is sure to receive still further endorsement at the next session of the Vatican Council. Anyone who has perused this encyclical which considers the Spirit as the soul of the Church or read, e.g., Father de Lubac's *The Splendor of the Church* can hardly have failed to see that in our self-understanding and self-presentation we do indeed do full justice to the biblical and credal concept of the Church as the home of the Spirit and fully accept such statements as the following made by the World Council of Churches at New Delhi last year:

The Church exists in time and place by the power of the Holy Ghost who effects in her life all the elements that belong to her unity, witness and service. He is the gift of the Father in the name of Jesus Christ to build up the Church, to lead her into the freedom and fellowship which belong to her peace and joy.

A third point on which Catholics and Prot-



estants agree in their ecclesiology concerns the intimate relationship existing between the Church and Christ's atonement or redemption. We all see very clearly that the Church has no meaning or existence apart from the saving acts of the historical Jesus, his death and glorification in particular; that the Church is the first-fruits of the Atonement. We all agree too that the whole role and *raison d'être* of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of salvation and somehow help all mankind to become partakers in the blessings of redemption. There was unfortunately a time when Protestantism had no mission-consciousness, when indeed it formally denied that the great commission recorded in the last chapter of St. Matthew ("Going therefore teach ye all nations . . .") had any contemporary relevance or obligatoriness. But that day is happily long past and now since the nineteenth century and earlier the Protestant Churches can look back with pride in the Lord on the glorious achievements of their own foreign missionaries.

## Further Agreements

Again in the same context of the relationship of the Church and the Atonement, we all agree that this universal atoning work of the Church does very definitely include in its full scope all that so much preoccupies modern scientific man, unbeliever as well as believer: the liberation of the world from the shackles of fear and ignorance and hunger and war, and the full development of the almost unlimited resources God has given us in Creation. We also acknowledge in common that the head of the Church is none other than the glorified Savior himself: that it is his life and truth and authority that animates it, that he alone is its king and prophet and priest, ruling it as king, teaching it as prophet and sanctifying it as priest. And finally we agree that in a very true sense the Church can be described as the fellowship of the redeemed under the headship of this glorified Saviour. We are of course divided on the nature and form of the ordained ministry and its distinction from the laity but we do proclaim unanimously that the Church is not the clergy nor the clergy the Church; that the Church is not a benevolent paternalistic, clerical organization, a spiritual welfare state, which looks after the needs

and supplies the wants of the laity and in so doing unmanns them, depriving them of that due sense of responsibility, initiative, achievement and significance which is so emphasized by Huxley the modern humanist; that the laity (I am quoting Cardinal Cushing of Boston) so far from being members in some secondary sense and mere passive objects to be cared for are in fact truly active members of the Body of Christ and with the members of the hierarchy "co-responsible" for the Church.

## Common Heritage

This impressive list of basic ecclesiological truths does represent an ancient common heritage of Catholics and Protestants which it gives me very great pleasure to recall and to emphasize here. In enunciating these truths however I have been picking my words very carefully (though perhaps not carefully enough) in order to avoid disaster. The fact is that we have all the time been very dangerously near the edge of that abyss which has been called "our deepest difference."

Before looking down this abyss however we might profitably consider two further points on which Catholics and Protestants are now approaching agreement. The first more properly belongs to sacramental theology but is very relevant to our present subject. It is best expressed perhaps in the highly significant though (to Protestants) little-known words of the Council of Trent:

Without faith no one ever has been justified [i.e. sanctified] . . . Faith is the beginning of man's salvation, the foundation and source of all justification without which it is impossible to please God and to come into the fellowship of his children.

This statement with its emphasis on the absolute necessity of faith for justification may seem to have a Protestant ring about it but the doctrine it expresses is in fact traditionally Catholic and in no way at variance with the equally traditional doctrine of sacramental efficacy *ex opere operato*. This latter, so tragically misunderstood and rejected by Protestantism, is paradoxically intended chiefly to safeguard the transcendence of God and the gratuity of his gifts so much appreciated and emphasized by Protestantism. As can be seen, e.g., in St. Thomas, *ex opere operato* (by the



mere positing of the act) is actually a synonym for *ex opere Christi* (by the act of Christ). The sacraments are Christ's own salvific acts as he lives and operates in the Church through his Spirit. They do not "initially depend on our co-operation. We are not the source of grace but Christ only." To be efficacious however in conferring grace the sacraments do demand that we place no obstacles, they do demand our individual faith or that of the Church, and Catholic theologians are more and more emphasizing that this response of faith is, however it be explained, an integral element of sacramental efficacy.

## Church and Incarnation

The second of the two points I referred to is the ecclesiological significance of the Incarnation, i.e. our common acknowledgment of the fact that there is some intimate relationship between the nature of the Church and the nature of the Incarnation. Protestant ecclesiology has traditionally tended to stress the mystery of our redemption on the Cross but it now recognizes more and more the relevance also of the whole mystery of the Incarnation and the Chalcedonian doctrine of Christ as two distinct though inseparable natures subsisting in the one person of the Word. This trend was a distinctive feature of the nineteenth century revival in the Church of England and Gore's *Lux Mundi* was significantly subtitled "Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation." It is a trend which is now being vigorously promoted by the Faith and Order Department of the World Council of Churches. The result is a growing sense of the fact that as the one Christ is inseparably though distinctly true God and true man, so in some similar way his Body the one Church must also be inseparably though distinctly truly divine and truly human; that as the visible sacred humanity hypostatically united to the invisible divine Word was the agent of our salvation in his death and glorification, so the visible Church indwelt and empowered by the invisible Spirit of Jesus, and its sacraments, those visible signs operating in the power of the invisible Spirit, must also be the true agents by which mankind partakes in that atonement accomplished once and for all by the historical Jesus.

There is, I have said, a growing sense of

all this among Protestants, but the operative word is "growing." The trend however is too unmistakable and too encouraging to pass over in any survey of our common ground. On the other hand it is as yet not developed and widespread enough to enable us to surmount what the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam termed "our deepest difference." Some consideration of this is, I think, now called for in the interest at least of clarity and completeness.

The difference to begin with is ecclesiological. Two sharply differing conceptions of Christianity and of the Church exist which, according to the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council, may be loosely described as "Protestant" and "Catholic." Not, it is emphasized, that either can be adequately defined nor that it anywhere exists in its pure form, much less that "Catholic" (at least in this case) is to be identified with Roman Catholic, but rather that from the main historical expressions of the Christian faith in all their variety and complexity two dominant conceptions do emerge and in the interests of mutual understanding are profitably considered in isolation.

## The "Protestant" View

The "Protestant" conception, sometimes termed "vertical," "primarily emphasizes the initiative of the Word of God and the response of faith, focused in the doctrine of justification by faith alone." It considers Christianity first and foremost as a Gospel of salvation to be apprehended by individuals. It tends to see justification as exclusively an act of God (in Karl Barth's terminology, as an Event, *Ereignis*) which descends vertically on the individual by ways and means unknowable and unpredictable, and unites him to Christ by spiritual, invisible ties in the real, i.e., invisible Church. It tends thus to consider that men are first united to Christ through faith within an invisible society of the truly faithful and then find admission to the visible Church. But this visible Church and its sacraments it rejects as real agents of salvation on the ground that there is only one mediator, Jesus Christ, and that the negation and condemnation of intermediaries is the quintessence of the Gospel. Instead therefore of being effectual signs of grace the sacraments, baptism in particular, are pledges or seals of blessings already belonging to the



recipient. The visible Church must not come between the soul and Christ; its role, like that of St. John the Baptist, is merely to point to Christ, and then to discipline, in obedience to the Gospel and the Law, those who have already become members of Christ.

To the Catholic however this "Protestant" view seems to reduce the Christian dispensation to a mere prolongation of the Old Testament economy of grace. And in fact both Luther and Calvin can be quoted to the effect that the sacraments of the New Law do not differ from the so-called sacraments of the Old Law, e.g., circumcision. On the Catholic viewpoint it seems impossible simply to equate the Church with Israel. The Church does much more than merely proclaim salvation for the very fundamental reason that salvation has already come in Christ. And as this salvation was accomplished once and for all not by God alone but by the sacred humanity of Christ hypostatically united to the Word so (in God's ordinary providence) it is not vertically by an act of God alone, by an Event, that we all become partakers in Redemption but by an institution, through the instrumentality of the visible Church indwelt and empowered by the invisible Spirit of Christ.

The order therefore is not Christ, the individual Christian, the Church as if the Church were a secondary stage that follows and seals a salvation already bestowed by faith alone. Rather the order is Christ, the visible Church, the individual Christian. This does not mean that the Church comes between Christ and the individual soul. Like Christ the Church is not a third party,

an intermediary. Like Christ the Church is a mediator: reconciling and uniting not in virtue of its distance from the two extremes but on the contrary in virtue of its identity with them. Like Christ the Church is both divine and human; it is composed of finite sinful human beings but it is indwelt at the same time by the Spirit of Jesus and thus can mediate in this divine Spirit the truth and life and authority of Jesus to all peoples and all ages. The Church with its institutional forms, the sacraments in particular and the apostolic succession in the historic episcopate, is, in the Catholic view "the covenanted home and agent of salvation." As the Anglican Gore put it: Christianity is "not merely or primarily a doctrine of salvation to be apprehended by individuals but the establishment of a visible society as the one divinely appointed home of the great salvation, held together not only by the inward Spirit but also by certain manifest and external institutions."

At Amsterdam these two conceptions, contrasted as "Protestant" and "Catholic," and "horizontal," "event" and "institution," were considered "inconsistent with each other" and "irreconcilable." We have however already noted the growing influence of the doctrine of the Incarnation on the Protestant view and on the Catholic view the growing influence of the doctrine that faith plays an integral part in sacramental efficacy. We may therefore reasonably look forward to an increasing inter-faith understanding and the eventual realization of doctrinal unity even on these fundamental points of ecclesiology which constitute "our deepest difference."

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### A Saint's Advice

"In the first place it is necessary that anyone who desires to be serviceable to heretics of the present age should hold them in great affection and love them very truly, putting out of his heart all thoughts and feelings that tend to their discredit. The next thing he must do is to win their good-will and love by friendly intercourse and converse on matters about which there is no difference between us, taking care to avoid all controversial subjects that lead to bickering and mutual recrimination. The things that unite us ought to be the first ground of our approach, not the things that keep us apart."

BLESSED PETER FAVRE



# READING I'VE LIKED

Priests and catechists will welcome enthusiastically the appearance of *Theology For Today* by Father Charles Davis. (Sheed and Ward, \$5.00). Father Davis teaches Dogmatic Theology at St. Edmund's College, England, and is editor of *The Clergy Review*. He is thoroughly abreast of the work that stems from the doctrinal revival on the European continent and its relevance to the other great movements in the Church as well as to its pastoral consequences. His occasional papers for various Catholic periodicals on vital theological themes all evidence clarity of thought and simplicity in expression. They have been eagerly read because of the writer's sympathy and acquaintance with the specific needs of modern man in the English-speaking world. It is a pleasure to recommend this collection of his writings.

It may well be doubted if anyone has made a more significant contribution to the ever-growing revival in catechetics in the United States than Father Gerard S. Sloyan. Besides his invaluable work as head of the Department of Religious Education at the Catholic University of America, he is an able, tireless speaker and writer on teaching religion. In *Modern Catechetics: Message and Method in Religious Formation* for which he is editor and contributor, he once again places all interested in catechetics in his debt. The fundamental relation of Scripture, Liturgy, Doctrine and true religious formation to the catechism are treated. And individual chapters discuss the requirements of specific groups from childhood through college years. Besides Father Sloyan, writers include Mary Perkins Ryan, Joseph Colomb, Bernard Cooke, Theodore Stone and other shining lights of the catechetical renewal (The Macmillan Company, \$5.95).

Some years ago, this reviewer saw a mimeographed digest of a book in French on the preaching of Parochial Missions. In the light of a busy missionary experience covering many years, this digest seemed to me to be the most thorough and stimulating writing on the subject that I had ever read. The original book is now available in English and should be read not only by priests who conduct parochial missions, but by all who are concerned about the word of God and its proclamation in our time. *To Preach*

*the Gospel* by P. Hitz, C.S.S.R. (Translated by Rosemary Sheed) (Sheed and Ward, \$3.95).

Three of the volumes of the Foundations of Catholic Theology Series, with Father Gerard S. Sloyan as editor, are now available. These dogmatic-biblical studies are excellently done and deserve a place on your shelves. They are clear, avoid unnecessary technicalities, and constantly emphasize the unity of God's great plan for our salvation. *The One God* by Wilfrid F. Dewan, C.S.P.; *The Life of Grace* by P. Gregory Stevens, O.S.B.; *The Sacraments of Healing and Vocation* (Penance, Extreme Unction, the Sacrament of Order, Marriage) by Paul F. Palmer, S.J. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Paper bound \$1.50; cloth bound \$3.95.

## GUIDE

- A publication of the Paulist Institute for Religious Research.
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## GUIDE

411 West 59th Street  
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# Guide Lights

## LABELS . . .

Msgr. James Tucek in an NC dispatch takes exception to the labels applied to the Fathers of the Council. He finds history repeating itself. At the First Vatican Council the labels were "Gallican" and "Ultramontane," "Infallibilists" and "Inopportunist," "Majority" and "Minority." Now, says Msgr. Tucek, it is "Liberals" and "Conservatives," "Integralists" and "Progressives," and even "Petrists" and "Paulists."

Another man, Father Hans Küng, who has frequently been called a liberal and a progressive, gave a press conference at Notre Dame in which he expressed mild annoyance at the terms "Liberal Wing" and "Conservative Wing." He said there are "different mentalities" within the Church which he described as those of "Open Door People" and "Closed Door People." And he also noted, by way of complication, that many "Closed Door People" voted for liberal decisions.

Others have also entered into the labeling game. Bishop Sheen speaks of "Shepherds" and "Fishermen." Father George Hagmaier likes "Integralists" but couples it with "Revisionists." A Protestant Observer, Presbyterian by persuasion, has written of "Traditionalists" and "Progressives." A Protestant newsman preferred "Doctrinals" and "Pastorals." Guide Lights was wrongly accused in a talk reported in the Brooklyn Tablet of calling some of the Council Fathers "Reactionaries"; but this term has appeared in print in opposition to "Liberals" and "Conservatives."

There seem to be two points one can glean from this. The first is that there was some difference of opinion at the council. The second is that there is even more difference of opinion on how this difference should be communicated.

Admittedly, a word or a short phrase applied to any group is not likely to convey accurately the ideas or the stance of every person in the group. Yet, the alternatives are rather impractical. They involve qualifications and qualifications of qualifications that could make a short report impossible. So, in the last analysis, it seems futile to carp about usage and propose endless sub-

stitutions for someone else to criticize. About all we can do is to avoid name-calling in our own use and employ common sense in interpreting the terms of others.

## LABOR . . .

Whatever the labels, some of the principals of the first session of the council, who have had a number of the names applied to them, are busily engaged for the next session. They do not seem to be overly excited by the terminological tempest in a teapot. Even Cardinal Ottaviani, who has had a rather bad press, did not complain about terms when he recently undertook to rebut some published rumors and remarks.

The cardinal has been surplize-deep in helping to prepare a new draft of the schema on the sources of revelation. As head of the Doctrinal Commission for Faith and Morals he presented the original schema at the first session only to have it rejected by a majority of the prelates because it was not pastoral in tenor and ecumenically-minded. As a result, Pope John ordered it to be withdrawn and redrafted through the collaboration of Cardinal Ottaviani's commission and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, headed by Augustin Cardinal Bea.

The new schema has been submitted to the special coordinating commission set up by the Holy Father at the end of the first session. It was studied by this commission at the end of March. It consists of an introduction and five chapters dealing with the revelation of the Word of God, inspiration and interpretation, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Church's sacred writings. It may undergo some emendations before it is presented in the Fall.

## LECTURES . . .

Cardinal Bea was not present in Rome for the discussion on the sources of revelation. He was in the U.S. on a lecture tour accompanied by Msgr. Willebrands and Father Thomas Stransky, C.S.P., two of the small permanent staff of the Secretariat. Father Stransky was called back to Rome,



but he is due to return in order to address the National Conference on Doctrine and Ecumenism in San Francisco early in April.

The cardinal delivered three lectures in Harvard University's Protestant-Catholic Colloquium. He assured participants that the council will "draw up guidelines" for further "activity and exploration" in important areas contributing in "a sincere and notable way" to the advancement of the ecumenical movement. He said he referred to some doctrinal points "Of intense interest to non-Catholic Christians" on which the Catholic Church has never "definitely decided."

These doctrinal points include "the union of Christians with Christ, the membership of non-Catholic Christians in Christ's Church, and the practice of the Church in divine worship." He added that the council will point out "the possibilities for whole-hearted cooperation with our separated brethren in areas of activity where differences in belief do not enter, where all can cooperate to insure the concrete realization of natural law concepts which all Christians hold in common, and to strive for the relief of our suffering and oppressed fellow humans."

The colloquium drew a capacity crowd to Harvard's Sanders Theatre and a closed circuit TV hookup carried the lectures to a nearby auditorium. The lectures were also broadcast by radio and taped for future telecast.

## LAITY . . .

Meanwhile, in Rome the coordinating commission was examining not only the schema on the sources of revelation which the cardinal had a hand in drafting, but also several others that were ready, including one on the lay apostolate. This schema has two parts. One regards the apostolate in general and the other the specific forms it takes.

After setting forth the principles on which the lay apostolate is based, the first part deals with its relations with the hierarchy. It also discusses collaboration between different forms of the apostolate, the formation and various conditions of life of those engaged in it, and the multiple fields in which it is presently found. The second part deals at length with fundamental features of the lay apostolate—those in the realm of Catholic Action, charitable action, and social action.

In this country a new book by Father John Gerken, S.J. (*Toward a Theology of the Layman*) has begun to attract attention. Father Gerken challenges the theory that

the lay state is inferior to the religious life. The laity, he says, are those whose honest answer is that God calls them to the lay state—not because they are less generous or in any way inferior, but because the lay state is their vocation, and there is divine work to be done which will go undone unless they do it.

He believes that theological thinking which has relegated the laity to an inferior role has wreaked great harm by causing the laity to suppose that they were not called to a complete dedication to the service of God, that they need only be Sunday Christians. On the contrary, says Father Gerken, the laity should be every bit as dedicated as the priest, sister, or brother. The holiness of the laity lies in showing forth the love of God and fellow men in the family and in the economic, civic, and political areas of life. This is not an inferior state. It is simply a different vocation.

## A LITTLE ON LAW . . .

The present Code of Canon Law went into effect in 1918. It was the result of efforts started by Pope Pius X in 1904. Since the promulgation of that revision numerous Church documents which have the force of law have been issued. It was for this reason that when Pope John announced his intention of calling an Ecumenical Council and of convening a synod for Rome, he also added as a third goal the revision of Canon Law. He has now set up a commission of thirty cardinals for this purpose. Among them are Cardinal Spellman and Paul Cardinal Leger, the Archbishop of Montreal.

## NEW ENCYCLICAL . . .

Father John Cronin remarks: Pope John XXIII, has astonished and delighted the world by his paradoxical behavior. He was advanced in years, yet he moved with the vigor of youth. He called Vatican Council II, primarily to renew the inner life of the Church. But the spirit of this council has already attracted our separated brethren and breathed a new atmosphere into relationship between the churches. He is gentle and kindly, preferring exhortation to condemnation. Nonetheless, he has made decisive and far-reaching changes within the Church.

His latest encyclical letter, *Peace on Earth*, is perhaps the most remarkable paradox of all. Here is a profoundly anti-Marxist document, yet it has much that should appeal to the Communist world.

JOHN J. KEATING, C.S.P.



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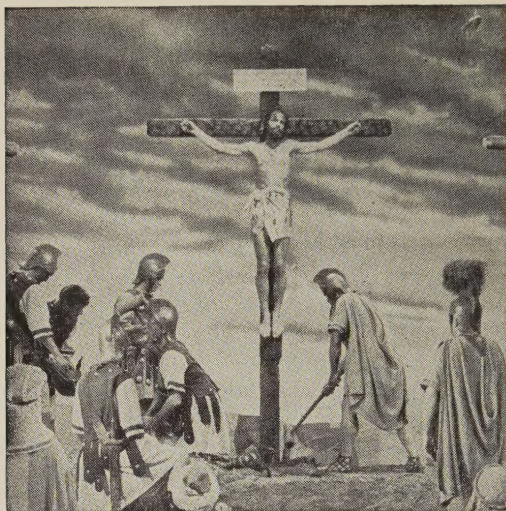
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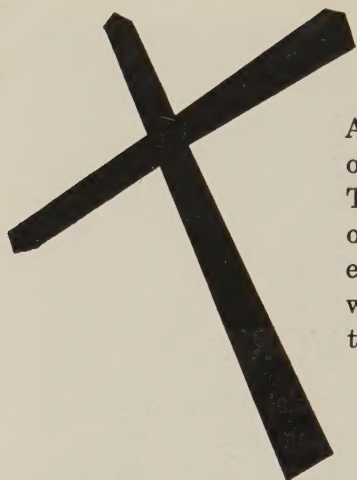
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